

A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS OF BUKALAPAK COMPARED TO TOKOPEDIA AND ELEVENIA

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ABSTRAK

Pertumbuhan jual beli online (*e-commerce*) di Indonesia saat ini berkembang sangat pesat, termasuk pertumbuhan website berbasis C2C. Di Indonesia, terdapat 3 situs jual beli online terbesar berbasis C2C yang iklannya cukup gencar ditayangkan di televisi. Dari ketiga website tersebut, *Bukalapak* adalah website jual beli online yang paling banyak diakses orang untuk transaksi online. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari tahu makna denotasi, makna konotasi dan pesan yang disampaikan oleh iklan *Bukalapak* sehingga menarik orang untuk mengaksesnya. Iklan yang saya analisis adalah iklan yang ditayangkan di televisi pada awal tahun 2015 hingga awal tahun 2016, antara lain iklan *Bukalapak* edisi Batu Akik dan Paket, iklan Tokopedia edisi Isyana vs. Gangster, dan Iklan Elevenia edisi Raisa ketemu Preman. Metode yang digunakan dalam menganalisis iklan tersebut adalah *interpretative qualitative*. Analisis dilakukan dengan menginterpretasikan setiap iklan dengan teori semiotik Roland Barthes. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa orang lebih tertarik untuk mengakses website yang memberikan konsep aman daripada website yang menyediakan banyak pilihan barang maupun harga yang lebih murah.

Kata kunci: jual beli online, website C2C, iklan televisi, semiotik Roland Barthes.

INTRODUCTION

For the past decade, the growth of internet users has increased greatly in Indonesia. Their activities are various; one of them is accessing online transaction or popularly known as e-commerce. According to social media agency We Are Social, the active e-commerce shoppers in Indonesia have increased from 16% in January 2015 to 27% in January 2016. This increase shows a great chance for e-commerce companies to continuously develop their business. Therefore, e-commerce companies use many ways to advertise their websites using several media, one of which is television. TV is one of the most effective media that can be used as a promotion tool, so there are

many e-commerce advertisements that can be found in television.

Each e-commerce company has different service depending on its scope and field, e.g. consumer-to-consumer (C2C), business-to-business (B2B), or business-to-consumer (B2C)¹. In this study, I analyze the advertisement of three most popular e-commerces which are based on consumer-to-consumer (C2C) marketplace. The term “consumer-to-consumer” means that the sellers and the

¹ B2B is online transaction between a company to other companies, e.g. *Indonetwork*, *Indotrading*, *Bizzy*.

B2C is online retail transaction from a company to individual buyer, like *Lazada*, *Zalora*, *Bhinneka*, etc.

buyers are people outside of the company, and the company only provides services which connect the sellers and the buyers.

The three most popular e-commerce websites having orientation on C2C are *Bukalapak*, *Tokopedia*, and *Elevenia*. *Bukalapak* was on the highest rank in terms of the most accessed website; it was at the top of the 13 highest ranks of Alexa pagerank² on April 10, 2016. At the same time, *Tokopedia* was at the top 15 and *Elevenia* was ranked 31. However, the fluctuations are not intense. For example, the ranks of the top three C2C marketplaces on March 27, 2016 are *Bukalapak* (12th), *Tokopedia* (14th), and *Elevenia* (26th).

E-commerce companies have their own concept of advertising which contain messages to promote their websites and applications. The companies can promote their products through the internet, TV, radio, or newspaper, but in this study, I focus on the analysis of the advertisements broadcasted on TV because TV is a medium which can reach a lot of people from various circles. In addition, its scope is wide because it is broadcasted throughout the country. In other words, the object of the analysis of the study is in the form of audio visual advertisements that were taken from video-sharing website named YouTube.

In this study, I interpret the meaning of the *Bukalapak* advertisements and compare them with the advertisements of *Tokopedia* and *Elevenia* to discover why *Bukalapak* becomes the most interesting one. The concept of the advertisements is analyzed using Roland Barthes's semiotics so as to see the denotation and connotation of the advertisements.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

² Alexa is an online traffic webmaster which measures the frequency of website access; its rank fluctuates everyday

Semiotics or semiology is generally defined as the study of sign. According to Guiraud (1975, p.1), "semiology is science which studies sign system: languages, codes, sets of signals, etc".

Ferdinand de Saussure conceives semiology as the science that studies the life of sign in society. He argues that sign consists of signifier and signified. Signifier is the sign itself, and signified is the mental concept of the sign. For example, a written sign "OX" consists of a signifier and a signified. The signifier is the written sign itself, and the signified is the mental image of the ox, not the animal ox. Saussure's concepts of meaning can be illustrated as the following figures:

sign	signified (concept)
	signifier (sound-image)

Figure 1. Saussure's concept of sign (in Noth, 1990, p.60)

Saussure's concept emphasized on the text instead of relating the sign in the text to cultural and personal experience of the interpreter. Thus, his concept cannot be used to analyze modern culture. His concept is developed by Roland Barthes, who creates the idea of meaning which can interact to personal or cultural experience named *two orders of signification*.

Roland Barthes develops signification system which is divided into first and second order of signification. The first order of signification (denotative meaning) describes the relationship between the signifier and signified of a sign. The second order of signification (connotative meaning) describes the relation of the sign related to the users' feelings or emotions and the values of their culture.

The units of connotation do not necessarily have the same size as the denotations. For instance, there is a photograph of a particular street taken in soft focus. From the denotative meaning, there will be two aspects: the signifier and signified of the photograph. The signifier will be the photograph itself which shows a picture of the street, while the signified is an image in mind which denotes the particular street. The connotation of this photograph is deeper than just an image of the street; the effect of the soft focus may create a sign for sentiment, i.e. soft hearted or nostalgia. It can be concluded that connotation explains how the object is photographed, and denotation explains about what is photographed.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, I use a descriptive qualitative method, because the analysis is subjective and the result of the analysis is described systematically in the text. I also use interpretative qualitative research because I interpret the advertisements by my own knowledge.

The data analyzed in this research are audio-visual materials since they are in the form of video, i.e. two advertisement videos of *Bukalapak* broadcasted in TV edition *Batu Akik* and *Paket*. The videos are taken from YouTube that were uploaded by *Bukalapak* itself entitled *Iklan Bukalapak Edisi Batu Akik* and *Iklan Bukalapak Edisi Paket*. In addition, there are one video of *Tokopedia* and one video of *Elevenia* that were taken from YouTube as the comparative data. The videos are entitled *Isyana vs. Gangster – Tokopedia TVC* and *Raisa ketemu Preman - Elevenia TVC*. The advertisements mentioned were broadcasted on TV around the date they were uploaded on YouTube; this was around early 2015 to early 2016.

In order to get the sample, I use purposive sampling technique; it is the technique to get the data by choosing them purposively. This technique is chosen because in collecting the data, I take advertisements which most closely represent the concept they have in advertising. For *Bukalapak* advertisement, I choose the advertisements edition *Batu Akik* and *Paket*, because they contains message of security which represent their slogan. This technique is also applied for *Tokopedia* and *Elevenia*.

In collecting the data, I use non-participatory observation, because I only interpret the meanings of the object without taking part in video making. In order to get the data, I downloaded the representative advertisement videos from YouTube. The videos taken are the advertisements broadcasted in early 2015 to early 2016. After that, the videos are analyzed further using Barthes's semiotics to get their denotation and connotation. The denotative meaning of each video is analyzed per scene and described into signifier and signified. Then the denotative meanings, the linguistic message and the type of shot are described in tables. The connotative meaning and the message of the analysis is described deeply and systematically in paragraphs.

The data are analyzed to decipher their denotative meanings and connotative meanings. The data are observed per scene, starting from the duration, scene, type of shot, linguistic messages to the meanings. However, the connotative meaning cannot always be described in every scene because of their arbitrary nature. The overall meanings and the messages of every object is also described in detail.

RESULT

Bukalapak

The slogan of *Bukalapak* is “*situs jual beli online mudah dan terpercaya*”, meaning that ‘*Bukalapak* is a user-friendly and trusted e-commerce website’. As declared in the slogan, to make *Bukalapak* a better e-commerce website, it has made some efforts, such as giving refund if the transaction is not being processed, creating levels for seller’s reputation so that buyers can choose the better store and goods, having a centered fund system, and also giving notification for every transaction and delivery process.

This research only takes two advertisements which represent the concept of *Bukalapak* as the user-friendly and most trusted e-commerce website. The advertisements chosen are the advertisements broadcasted in early 2015 to early 2016, as well as the parameter of the Alexa ranking. The two advertisements are *Bukalapak* edition *Batu Akik* and edition *Paket*.

Batu Akik

The *Bukalapak* advertisement edition *Batu Akik* ‘agate’ was broadcasted in TV around early 2015. The 30-second-video has denotative meaning that a woman who buys an agate ring online has been deceived. Then *Bukalapak* offers the audience to have an online transaction through this website. The woman then buys agate ring in *Bukalapak* and gets an original agate ring.

The connotative meaning of the scenes is that someone is buying something through online transaction. Online transaction does not allow the buyer to see the good directly, so when the buyer gets the order delivered, it becomes such an exciting moment. It is supported by their expression and verbal messages such as *wah!* ‘wah!, *ini baru lagi!* ‘it is new

again!’, *cantik* ‘pretty’, *nah ini asli!* ‘this is original’.

The buyer does not buy it to fulfill primary or secondary needs because its functions is for accessories. It shows that the buyer is from the middle or upper class of society because she has many agate rings on her hands, as she follows the trend of agate at that time. In addition, the buyer’s appearance looks extravagant, as is reflected by her bright complexion, nice cloth, and the accessories she is wearing (rings, necklace and bracelet). This is supported by the statement *ini baru lagi* ‘it is new again’, meaning that the woman has already had a number of agates.

From the fifth and sixth scenes, the connotative meaning is that there are no guarantees for the originality of the agate, since there is nothing that can prove its originality except the experts of this field. The linguistic message *asli nggak tu?* that is spoken by the buyer’s friend connotes doubt for the agate’s originality, and the words *ya asli lah* connotes certainty of the buyer. From the way the buyer praises the new agate and the fact that the agate is fake, the buyer is an amateur in this field.

Based on the next scenes and the narrator’s voice, *mending beli di Bukalapak.com* means that ‘it is better to buy online in *Bukalapak*’. This connotes that other e-commerces are worse than *Bukalapak*. The voice states *Bukalapak* is better because of *Bukalapak*’s system, as is stated ‘because there are millions of goods from hundreds of thousand trusted sellers who have positive feedbacks’. It means that *Bukalapak* is a perfect e-commerce website, since it provides various products from thousands of trusted sellers. In addition, the scenes of laptop accessing *Bukalapak* show the steps how to order something in the website. It shows how brief and fast the buyer orders the agate; this support its slogan as user-friendly e-commerce.

The last two scenes indirectly show how trusted *Bukalapak* website is. As shown in the previous scenes, the woman has ordered a new agate ring in *Bukalapak* and after she checks it, she knows that it is original. The presence of the courier, who is waiting for the buyer's signature, emphasizes the careful buyer, who checks the package before signing the delivery receipt. This means that the buyer is worry about buying a fake agate again; that is why, the buyer shouts "*nah ini asli!*" 'Ok, now this is original!' happily after knowing the agate is original. The statement is used to clarify the agate's originality. The utterance also implicates that *Bukalapak* has sellers who sell original goods.

Based on the agate as the sample of the goods, *Bukalapak* tries to promote the agate which is booming in that time. Moreover, it chooses agate as the item in this advertisement because it considers agate as something whose originality is difficult to be proven. Therefore, agate is a suitable product to promote *Bukalapak*, which emphasizes on its secure transaction. By using feedback system, prospective buyers can read the feedback left by the previous buyers of the same store. Hence, in order to know its originality, amateurs can read the previous feedbacks, so that they are sure that the agate is original.

Paket

Another advertisement of *Bukalapak* used as the object of analysis is the advertisement *Paket* 'package' edition. The story of this advertisement tells about a young man who waits for a delivery of his online order. However, whenever he hears a courier comes, it is not his package which is delivered. Because of the circumstance, *Bukalapak* offers the audience to buy something in *Bukalapak.com*.

The connotative meaning is the man is waiting for his package. This implicates that the man bought something online. The reason why the man is always in hurry is that he cannot wait for the order to come. People are usually excited when they get their order delivered. Another possible reason the man is always in hurry is that the date of delivery is fall due.

In deliveries, it usually takes a few days of shipping depending on the distance, and the buyer knows the date when the order is arrived. From the linguistic message "*Paket gue datang*" 'my package is coming', the man is sure that the package is for him. This suggests that the man knows that his order should be arrived on that day, but the order is not coming, so the man is being deceived.

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After knowing the fact that his order is not delivered, the man becomes angry and destructs everything around him. The anger of the man is caused by frustration and worry because the order is not delivered, and there is no guarantee for him to get his money back. Based on several scenes, the man's room is messy and there a lot of stuff placed in one room. Therefore, the man is from middle or lower class, and buying camera is something pretty expensive for him. This situation makes the man frustration whenever he knows that his package is not delivered.

The scene when the man accesses *Bukalapak's* website through an application in his tablet phone contains promotion of the *Bukalapak's* application. It indicates that *Bukalapak* has an application that can be accessed by tablet or android phone. The scene 17 also contains a symbol of Google Play Store, which means people can download the application in the Play Store. The step when the man search a camera in the tablet is shown as quite fast. This indicates that *Bukalapak* is easy to be operated, and it supports *Bukalapak's* slogan as a user-friendly website.

The insert shot which shows many cameras in *Bukalapak's* website indicates that there will be a lot of products appearing when we input a name of a product. In other words, many products exist, so there are many options for buyers to choose the good they want. It also means that there are many sellers joining as *Bukalapak* users, so buyers can choose the sellers with better reputation.

The verbal message *makanya beli di Bukalapak.com* 'because of that, it is better to buy in Bukalapak.com' indicates that the incident happened because the man did not buy the camera from *Bukalapak*. It indirectly says that if people buy online product in *Bukalapak*, this kind of incident will never happen. The reason is that *Bukalapak* guarantees refund for buyers, so it states that having online transaction is risky except in *Bukalapak*. This is supported by the verbal message *Jadi lebih aman* 'so it is safer' which aims at convincing the audience. The last scenes also support the idea of safety when the man gets his order delivered after he buys it in *Bukalapak*. The man does not seem hurry or worry knowing the delivery, because *Bukalapak* will refund his money if his order is not sent.

Based on the two advertisements of *Bukalapak* edition *Batu Akik* and *Paket*, it can be concluded that the message

Bukalapak wants to convey is its security in online transaction. The concepts of the advertisements are safety and security for the buyers through feedback system and the guarantee of refund. In other words, it is the security of online transaction that is emphasized in advertisement of *Bukalapak*.

Tokopedia

Tokopedia has advertised its website and application through many media, including TV. In case of its advertisement, *Tokopedia* has a brand ambassador who promotes its website and application. The present brand ambassador of *Tokopedia* is a famous singer named Isyana Sarasvati. Most concepts of *Tokopedia's* advertisement emphasize on the high number of sellers joining as its member. Therefore, there are many various products existing in there.

Isyana vs. Gangster

As the object of analysis, I analyze the advertisement edition "Isyana vs. Gangsters". This edition tells about a woman named Isyana who is going to eat in a restaurant, but then there are ructions between gangsters in the restaurant. When all the people in the restaurant are scared including Isyana, there are voices saying to calm down, because *Tokopedia* has many types of goods. Isyana then throws some culinary stuff in the restaurant and paralyze the gangsters down.

The connotative meanings of the analysis means that she is in a place where everything around her has Japanese atmosphere. This includes the food, accessories, clothes, and the customers. Based on the scene, there are some Japanese accessories, such as Sakura flower, bonsai, chopsticks, *shuriken*, *katana* (Japanese sword), letter of *kanji*, even *yakuza* (Japanese gangster). In this case, some customers are gangsters, or popularly known in Japan as *Yakuza*. One

of them shouts *Anata!* means 'you' which implicates that they challenge another gangster.

The fight between gangsters causes chaos in the restaurant and makes people around them afraid, including Isyana who wears green outfit as a representation of *Tokopedia*. The objects like spoon, plate, cup, and chopsticks are spoken coincide with the *Tokopedia's* searching bar. This is intended to show to the audience that when they search stuff in the searching bar, there will be the stuff appearing.

'Calm down, *Tokopedia* has spoon' has connotative meaning that *Tokopedia* provides spoons in its website and its application from many sellers joining as *Tokopedia's* member. The word 'calm down' is a suggestion for Isyana not to worry to use the culinary stuff. So, Isyana can break the stuff because she can buy them all in *Tokopedia*. The next utterance 'there is also plate' refers to *Tokopedia*. This implies that *Tokopedia* also has sellers who sell plates in its website. When *Tokopedia's* searching bar is written with the name of the stuff, Isyana gets the stuffs. It implies that when people type the products in *Tokopedia*, the products will appear immediately.

Overall, the linguistic messages state that Isyana does not need to worry to fight against the gangster with culinary stuff, because *Tokopedia* provides all stuff. When Isyana accesses *Tokopedia's* application through a cellphone, the linguistic message states 'you can get anything you need in Tokopedia, the sellers are in great quantities'. Its connotative meaning is *Tokopedia* has many products and variations of everything that people need in the website because there are many sellers in *Tokopedia*. This meaning supports the previous scenes that *Tokopedia* provides many kinds of culinary products, even the small one like chopsticks and spoons.

Moreover, it connotes the completeness: *Tokopedia* has all stuffs of culinary.

For the object of the advertisement, *Tokopedia* chooses *yakuza* to support the Japanese customers. In this advertisement, they are represented by group of people who wear black suit. These people are well-dressed because *yakuza* is a large criminal organization which exists in Japan. *Yakuza* are known for their cruelty, ruthless, and loyalty to their gang. However, in the advertisement Isyana can beat them all easily by throwing them with culinary stuffs. It has connotative meaning that their products have a good quality because the stuff can beat the member of *yakuza*.

Based on the analysis above, the message that can be drawn from the advertisement is that *Tokopedia* provides many kinds of products and its variations from a lot of sellers joining as its member. In *Tokopedia's* advertisements, the concept always deals with the many variations of goods existing in *Tokopedia*. It is not only in this advertisement, most concept of *Tokopedia's* advertisement are similar that in *Tokopedia* provides many products.

Elevenia

In advertising, *Elevenia* has brand ambassadors who promote its website and application. The present brand ambassador of *Elevenia* is a popular singer named Raisa. She has appeared five times in *Elevenia's* advertisement broadcasted in TV. The *Elevenia's* advertisement analyzed in this research is the edition *Raisa ketemu Preman* 'Raisa meets Hoodlums'.

Raisa ketemu Preman

This advertisement tells about a hoodlum who is crying because he wants to buy a hair straightener, but the price is expensive. Then Raisa talks to him and suggests him to buy it in *Elevenia* because

there are a lot of cheap products. The hoodlum then looks happy knowing the cheaper price of the thing he needs in *Elevenia*.

The scene while the hoodlum is crying implies that he is sad because of something he knows from his cellphone. Based on the hoodlum's statement 'this is it, want to buy it but it is so expensive', we can infer the hoodlum has accessed e-commerce website to buy something, but the price is too expensive for him. It connotes the other e-commerces sell expensive goods. Raisa's utterance *pake Elevenia aja* 'why don't you buy in Elevenia?' is a suggestion for the man and the audience to buy online in *Elevenia*. This suggestion implies that *Elevenia* is the solution for those who want to buy cheaper goods.

Based on the picture of hair straightener's price, there are discounts for products in *Elevenia*. This means that *Elevenia* provides goods in cheaper price and it is only in *Elevenia* that provides cheap prices. This condition is supported by Raisa's statement 'Online shopping in Elevenia makes people happy, because it guarantees to sell the cheapest price'. The word 'cheapest' is a comparison among others, so it claims that *Elevenia* sells the cheapest price among all e-commerces.

The objects of this advertisement, the hoodlum and hair straightener, are suitable to show the cheapness of the *Elevenia*'s product. Hoodlums are people who do not have a proper job, so they include in lower class society. However, he wants a styling tool whose price is generally expensive. Thus, the price is too expensive for him to buy as a lower class. *Elevenia* tries to convey message that *Elevenia* is a perfect e-commerce for people who need cheap prices, even for the unemployed ones.

Hoodlums are considered as criminal who get income from

blackmailing other people, and they do not care about style. Their appearance is usually scary so that people will be afraid and do as they told. However, in this advertisement, the hoodlums do not look like criminal, because they are crying in public place for something irrelevant with the image of hoodlum. This image is made by *Elevenia* to create funny effects of the advertisement.

The scene when Raisa says *klik* 'click' refers to the first word of *Elevenia*'s slogan. The 'click' is the first thing people must do in accessing *Elevenia*; the click means open the website or application of *Elevenia*. The meaning of *cari* is search the product in *Elevenia*'s searching bar to get the list of the products. The 'happy' that Raisa means here is that people who find the products in *Elevenia* will be happy because the prices of the products are cheaper than the others. Aside from the cheap prices, the three-word slogan also has implication that buying goods in *Elevenia* is easy, because it only takes three steps.

The message of this advertisement is that *Elevenia* provides cheap products from many sellers. It indirectly says that *Elevenia* is a perfect e-commerce website for those who want to buy something cheaper than other e-commerces. In buying online, people do not only buy the products but also pay the shipping charges. Therefore, online transaction is rather expensive. The concept of cheapness is used as a promotion tool for *Elevenia* to show that it provides many services to cut the prices. In addition, they also convince people that accessing *Elevenia* is easy as is reflected in the three-step of *Elevenia*'s slogan.

CONCLUSION

The three advertisements have different concepts in delivering its promotion: *Bukalapak* focuses on its security, *Tokopedia* on its variations, and

Elevenia on its cheaper prices. Based on the fact that *Bukalapak* became the most accessed website and got the highest rating of reviewers, it had relation to the advertisement. It can be concluded that people prefer to have online transaction in website with better services, including the guarantees and the security of the transaction, instead of the variations or the cheapness.

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